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ABSTRACT

A review was conducted of the extent to which selected federal agencies are allowing employees to use alternative work schedules (AWS) as authorized by the Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act. The statute permits, rather than requires, agencies to institute AWS programs. The study surveyed the policies and practices of 59 federal organizations of various sizes. Two of the 59 organizations had no AWS program, and the majority of the others limited work schedule flexibility. Many of these organizations allowed relatively few employees to participate in AWS because their managers believed employees needed to follow the same work schedules to accomplish the organization's work. Some managers feared they might not be able to adequately supervise their subordinates' work under an AWS program. In notable contrast, the organizations that permitted large numbers of employees considerable work schedule flexibility reported no adverse effects of AWS on agency operations and often found that AWS enhanced their ability to serve customers' needs. (Three appendices, which form the bulk of the document, outline: (1) the objectives, scope, and methodology of the study; (2) AWS policies and practices in 59 federal organizations; and (3) the major contributors to the report.) (MDM)

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United States General Accounting Office

GAO

Report to Congressional Committees

March 1994

# ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

## Many Agencies Do Not Allow Employees the Full Flexibility Permitted by Law

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GAO

**United States**
**General Accounting Office**
**Washington, D.C. 20548**

**General Government Division**

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March 29, 1994

The Honorable John Glenn
Chairman, Committee on
Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable William V. Roth, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable William L. Clay
Chairman, Committee on
Post Office and Civil Service
House of Representatives

The Honorable John T. Myers
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Post Office and Civil Service
House of Representatives

This report presents the results of our review of the extent to which selected federal agencies are allowing employees to use alternative work schedules (AWS) authorized by the statute.[1] We did the review as part of our continuing assessment of the effectiveness of federal employment policies in helping agencies recruit and retain quality employees now and in the future.

The review was prompted in large part by our findings in earlier reports that addressed work scheduling issues. In 1991, we reported the results of a survey of employment practices in large companies[2] that showed, among other things, that about 60 percent of the companies allowed AWS for their employees, and another 10 percent were considering adopting such scheduling. In April 1992, we reported that leading nonfederal employers had found that allowing employees flexibility in their working arrangements, including work schedules, helped employees better deal

[1]Under the Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-390) that authorized AWS as an experimental program in 1978 and was made permanent in 1985 (P.L. 99-196), federal agencies can allow employees the flexibility to vary their daily arrival and departure times and, under some options, to vary the length of their workday or workweek. In all cases, full-time employees are required to work 80 hours each biweekly pay period, unless on approved leave.

[2]Workforce Issues: Employment Practices in Selected Large Private Companies (GAO/GGD-91-47, Mar. 13, 1991).

with work/family concerns and improved employee recruitment, retention, and productivity.[3] In a June 1992 report on the results of a governmentwide survey of federal employees,[4] we reported that less than half (41 percent) of all respondents said they worked alternative schedules. Of those respondents who did not use AWS, nearly 77 percent said their agencies either did not allow them to participate in an AWS program or did not have an AWS program. Fifty-five percent of the respondents who did not participate in AWS said they would prefer to have more work schedule flexibility.

Thus, our basic objective was to determine why AWS is not more widely available to federal employees.

We discussed AWS issues with personnel officials of 59 organizations in 9 departments and agencies. Although the results cannot be generalized to the government as a whole, we believe the review was sufficiently broad to provide a good indication of how the AWS program is being carried out in the government. (See app. I for a listing of the organizations we visited and app. II for a description of the AWS policies and practices being followed in each of the organizations at the time of our review.) The objectives, scope, and methodology of our review are discussed in detail in appendix I.

## Results in Brief

The statute permits, rather than requires, agencies to institute AWS programs. The AWS policies promulgated by agencies' headquarters tended to be general and delegated to the operating units decisionmaking authority on the type of AWS program allowed and which employees were eligible to participate.

Two of the 59 organizations we visited had no AWS program, and the majority of the others generally limited work schedule flexibility. Many of these organizations allowed relatively few employees to participate in AWS because their managers believed employees needed to follow the same work schedules to accomplish the organization's work. Some managers feared they might not be able to adequately supervise their subordinates' work under an AWS program.

[3]The Changing Workforce: Comparison of Federal and Nonfederal Work/Family Programs and Approaches (GAO/GGD-92-84, Apr. 23, 1992).

[4]Federal Employment: How Federal Employees View the Government as a Place to Work (GAO/GGD-92-91, June 18, 1992).

In notable contrast, the organizations that permitted large numbers of employees considerable work schedule flexibility reported no adverse effects of AWS on agency operations and, in fact, often found that AWS enhanced their ability to serve customers' needs. Officials in these organizations said top management leadership and support of the AWS program were the key reasons for its success. The officials acknowledged that employee work schedule flexibility requires managers to change the manner in which they supervise employees, schedule meetings, and permit employees to carry out their work responsibilities. They said mutual trust and cooperation between supervisors and employees were critical to the success of any AWS program.

A September 1993 report by the National Performance Review (NPR) recommended that the President issue an executive order supporting AWS. In the event that this action is taken and it causes agencies to liberalize their AWS programs, use of AWS should increase.

## History and Purpose of the AWS Program in the Federal Government

For years, traditional employment policies required all employees in an organization to work a 5-day week schedule with the same fixed arrival and departure times. However, in 1967, a German aerospace company successfully tried a flexible work schedule arrangement for its employees to alleviate heavy traffic congestion on highways near its plant. In 1971, the concept of flexible work schedules was introduced in the United States. Shortly thereafter, on the basis of studies showing that flexibility was generally beneficial to companies and employees, federal agencies began to experiment by allowing their employees some flexibility in scheduling their daily workhours.

In a 1974 report[5] recounting the evidence cited by federal and nonfederal employers that AWS increased productivity and morale, we concluded that there was no apparent reason why AWS should not be established throughout the government.

Subsequent to our findings, The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-390) was enacted, calling for a controlled 3-year experiment of AWS in federal agencies. The act specified that the experimental program was to assess the positive and negative effects of AWS on (1) the efficiency of government operations; (2) mass transit facilities and traffic; (3) levels of energy consumption;

[5]Legal Limitations on Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules for Federal Employees (B-179810, Oct. 21, 1974).

(4) service to the public; (5) increased opportunities for employment; and (6) employees' morale, welfare, and family life. In 1982, the program was extended for 3 years, and in 1985, legislation providing permanent authorization for agencies to use AWS was enacted.[6]

In a 1985 report,[7] we presented the results of a survey of federal employees and the views of agency managers on AWS. The employee survey covered a random sample of all permanent employees in the executive branch. The employees' responses showed widespread support for the use of AWS in the government. For example, of the respondents who said they were using AWS, 72 percent said AWS gave them greater flexibility to meet family obligations, and 74 percent said AWS had a favorable or very favorable effect on their morale. Overall, 74 percent of all respondents supported continuation of AWS.

Similarly, the interviews with agency managers (personnel and labor relations officials in 11 agencies) showed positive attitudes toward AWS. The managers said AWS had resulted in improved (1) service to the public, (2) employee morale, (3) efficiency of agency operations, and (4) employment opportunities. All the managers said employees were able to devote more time to their families and personal interests as a result of AWS.

## Types of AWS Authorized by the 1985 Statute

The term "alternative work schedules," as described in the statute, encompasses two different work-schedule variations—flexible and compressed. Guidance provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) suggested five flexible schedule and three compressed schedule programs agencies might use.

A flexible schedule can split the workday into two distinct kinds of time—core hours and flexible hours or bands. Under most flexible schedule arrangements, all employees must be at work during core hours, but they may establish their arrival and departure times during the flexible bands. Under the statute, flexible schedule programs may allow employees to earn credit hours.[8] However, the statute gave agency heads the

[6]P.L. 99-196, Dec. 23, 1985.

[7]Alternative Work Schedules for Federal Employees (GAO/GGD-85-63, July 19, 1985).

[8]Credit hours are hours worked in excess of an employee's basic work requirement. An employee elects to work the extra hours in order to shorten the length of another workday or workweek. Employees do not receive overtime pay for the extra hours worked.

discretion not to include the credit hours option in a flexible schedule program.

Compressed schedules are fixed schedules in which employees can complete the 40-hour workweek in fewer than 5 days or the 80-hour biweekly pay period in fewer than 10 days. The statute does not permit credit hours to be earned under compressed schedules.

## Five Flexible-Schedule Models

The five flexible-schedule models suggested by OPM are described below. However, these models are not all-inclusive; agencies may adapt the models to fit their specific needs.

- Flexitour allows an employee to select arrival and departure times within a flexible band; however, once selected, the hours become the employee's regular work schedule. Flexitour programs have one set of core hours that include a standard lunch period. The basic work requirement is the traditional 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, and 80 hours in a biweekly pay period. However, in flexitour programs with a credit hours provision, employees can fulfill the basic work requirement in fewer than 10 days in a pay period. Without a credit hours option, flexitour is the most rigid of the flexible schedules.
- Gliding schedule allows employees to vary their daily arrival and departure times within the agency's established flexible band. Agencies may establish one or two sets of core hours. A single core hour set includes a standard lunch period, generally 30 minutes, and a double set of core hours allows for flexible hours at midday. For example, a double set of core hours may be 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., with flexible hours of 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.; 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (midday); and 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The basic work requirement is the same as under flexitour. With a credit hours provision, gliding schedule allows employees added flexibility.
- Variable-day schedule requires employees to work 40 hours a week, but allows them to vary the number of hours worked each day. For example, an employee may work 10 hours on Monday, 7 hours on Tuesday, 10 hours on Wednesday, 8 hours on Thursday, and 5 hours on Friday. In addition, agencies may allow employees to be absent during core hours and make up those hours during the flexible band as long as the time is made up in the same week of the biweekly pay period.
- Variable-week schedule allows employees to vary the length of their workweek as well as their workday. The basic work requirement is 80 hours in a biweekly pay period. Similar to the variable-day schedule,

agencies may allow employees to be absent during established core periods and make up those hours at any time during the same pay period.

- Maxiflex schedule allows employees to vary the number of hours worked each day and the number of days worked each week. Similar to the variable-week schedule, the basic work requirement is 80 hours during the pay period. However, an agency may establish core hours for fewer than 10 workdays; or, to provide maximum flexibility, it may choose not to establish core hours.

## Three Compressed-Schedule Models

The three compressed-schedule models described by OPM are as follows:

- The 3-day workweek allows employees to work a maximum of 13 hours and 20 minutes a day in a 40-hour workweek. Agencies that use the 3-day workweek generally require employees to work six 12-hour days and one 8-hour day each biweekly pay period.
- The 4-day workweek or "4/10" schedule allows employees to work 10 hours a day, 40 hours a week, with 1 nonworkday each week of the pay period.
- The "5-4/9" plan allows employees to complete the pay period in eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day with 1 nonworkday each pay period.

## Work Schedule Flexibility Is Limited in Most Organizations

Other than prescribing that AWS was a proper subject for collective bargaining with federal employee unions, the statute allowed, rather than required, agencies to establish AWS programs. Using the discretion allowed by the statute, the departments and agencies in our review established AWS policies that varied widely. In general, the policies did not permit the maximum work scheduling flexibility authorized by the statute.

In the majority of the nine departments and agencies included in our review, headquarters offices delegated AWS policy implementation, including determination of whether individual employees could participate in AWS, to their operating organizations. In many cases, implementation authority was further delegated to organizations' supervisors.

All but 2 of the 59 organizations we visited had some type of AWS program in use. However, the approaches taken by the 57 organizations in implementing AWS were often different. For instance, the statute authorized agencies to allow employees on flexible work schedules to carry over as many as 24 credit hours from one biweekly pay period to the next. Fifteen organizations allowed the maximum 24-hour carryover for

eligible employees, but 37 organizations prohibited employees from earning credit hours.[9] The other five organizations had varying restrictions on the number of credit hours that could be carried over. For example, employees in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) could carry over a maximum of 4 credit hours.

The only flexibility permitted by 14 organizations was to allow employees to select arrival and departure times within a flexible band. These employees were required to work 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. Fourteen organizations also limited AWS participation to particular employee groups. For example, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) offered compressed schedules to employees in its computer operations center and printing plant facility only. At the other extreme, seven organizations permitted at least some of their employees to work maxiflex schedules, which basically allowed the employees to create their own work schedules with supervisory approval.

We found a number of reasons for the differing approaches taken by the 57 organizations. Variations sometimes occurred because union and nonunion employees were treated differently. Nonunion employees were not always given the same AWS options that union employees received in contracts negotiated by unions and organization management. For example, the negotiated agreement for union employees in the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the Secretary allowed eligible employees to work compressed schedules or flexible schedules with credit hours. However, some nonunion employees in the same organization were not allowed to work compressed schedules. They could participate in a flexible work schedule program but were prohibited from earning credit hours. The reverse was also true. At the Air Education and Training Command activity at Lackland AFB, employees in the civilian personnel office, who were nonunion, had been allowed to work compressed work schedules for several years. However, employees working elsewhere on the base, who were represented by a union, were generally required to maintain traditional work schedules.[10]

In other organizations, we were told by personnel officials that AWS practices differed greatly depending on individual managers' attitudes

[9]Of these, three organizations prohibited specific groups of employees from earning credit hours under their flexible schedule programs. Also, three other organizations used only compressed schedules that, under the statute, do not allow credit hours to be earned.

[10]In June 1993, hospital nurses were authorized to work a compressed schedule. In addition, an official told us negotiations were under way with the union to authorize compressed work schedules for the remaining employees.

toward allowing employees work schedule flexibility. For example, at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center in Denver, the nursing staff was allowed to select either a 3-day or a 4-day week compressed work schedule, but employees outside the nursing units were not permitted to participate in AWS. The chief nurse said that a participative style of management was used in the unit, whereby staff decided what type of work schedule would allow them to accomplish their mission and balance their work/family lives. A personnel official said the compressed work schedules have helped the medical center remain competitive in recruiting and retaining nurses.

Some officials told us that AWS was implemented in their organizations after a change in leadership occurred. For example, a personnel official at the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Sacramento office said the region had a "progressive" leader who valued diversity and wanted to accommodate employees' work and family responsibilities by giving them more choices in their work schedules. In another organization, the Farm Credit Administration (FCA), nearly half the employees could work compressed schedules only during April through October—daylight savings time.[11] According to an agency official, the compressed work schedule program was not widely supported by the organizations' managers and the "on/off" policy was considered to be a reasonable compromise. However, after a new agency head was appointed, the compressed schedule program was offered year-round to all full-time employees effective November 1993. The agency head believed compressed schedules afforded participants greater job satisfaction because it provided employees the opportunity to arrange work schedules more suited to their personal needs.

The officials from organizations that had liberal AWS programs, such as maxiflex, or had several work schedule options available to employees generally said they had managers who were interested in a family-friendly environment. In contrast, the officials from organizations that had more restrictive AWS programs often told us they had "old line" or conservative managers who believed employees must work during the same hours every day to be productive.

We found that employees in field locations were often allowed greater work schedule flexibility than employees in headquarters offices. However, we also found exceptions. For example, the Maritime

[11]Examiners, who represent over 50 percent of the agency, were allowed to work compressed schedules year round to accommodate their travel requirements.

Administration, an operating division of the Department of Transportation (DOT), allowed its headquarters' employees to work AWS but required its regional employees to work traditional schedules.

We also found instances where organizations with employees in multiple locations had different AWS practices. One example of this was the Air Force Intelligence Command. The Command's headquarters is located at Kelly AFB in San Antonio. A field unit is located at Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton. According to a headquarters official, both locations did similar work and had about the same number of employees. However, headquarters employees worked traditional schedules, whereas employees at Wright-Patterson were allowed to work flexible schedules. The official said Wright-Patterson was the only facility under the Command's authority that allowed its employees to participate in AWS.

In some cases, we were told that variations in AWS policies created employee recruitment difficulties. For example, although most of the bureaus and services within the Department of the Interior (DOI) were headquartered in the Department's building in Washington, D.C., each organization had a different AWS policy. Also, AWS policies sometimes differed within the DOI organizations. A personnel official in an organization that allowed limited flexibility in employees' work schedules believed that job candidates did not apply for positions in the organization because vacancy announcements stated the work schedules employees had to follow.

## Officials' Suggestions on How to Successfully Implement AWS

During our review, officials in the organizations that allowed considerable work schedule flexibility described their experiences in implementing AWS programs and discussed approaches they had found to be successful in helping these programs run smoothly. According to these officials, AWS programs will not succeed if implemented in the manner of "business as usual." Rather, organizations must make a concerted effort to develop and implement AWS programs that will allow organizations to serve their customers while enhancing the quality of life of their employees.

Some of the suggested changes in the manner organizations do business to accommodate AWS included (1) routinely scheduling meetings on days other than Mondays or Fridays when most employees who work compressed schedules are not present, (2) seeking greater cooperation between organizations that regularly work together, and (3) cultivating the same patience and tolerance for accommodating employees' work

schedules as is required for accommodating employees' vacations and official travel.

One official told us that managers in his organization held meetings on the first and third Thursdays of the month rather than on Fridays because of employees' compressed schedules. Several officials told us their organizations limited the number of employees who could be away from work on any given day under the compressed schedule program. For example, a regional office of the Minerals Management Service (MMS), an organization within DOI, allowed no more than 20 percent of its employees who worked compressed schedules to be off work on the same day. Another official told us his organization cross-trained employees, where appropriate, to ensure that adequate coverage was maintained on particular employees' nonworkdays.

According to some officials, effective communication between employees and supervisors is absolutely essential to the success of an AWS program. In fact, an official at the San Francisco VA medical center said the key reason for the AWS program's success in that organization was good communication. We also noted that AWS programs in the organizations with more liberal policies generally specified responsibilities for both supervisors and employees that encouraged communication. For example, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) promulgated an order that required supervisors and their subordinates to develop work schedules that ensured sufficient personnel were present on any workday to carry out normal business activities. The order also required that supervisors give employees advance notice of at least one pay period when operational priorities required a change in employees' schedules, except in unusual circumstances such as fire or natural disaster.

Many officials also said trust between supervisors and employees is critical if an AWS program is to succeed. Supervisors may not always be present during an employee's entire workday, especially if the employee follows a compressed schedule. In those situations, the supervisor must be able to trust that the employee will be working either before the supervisor arrives or after the supervisor leaves for the day. One official expressed the opinion that 2 percent of all employees will always "abuse the clock," no matter what measures are used to prevent abuse, and the organization decided to implement the AWS program for the benefit of the other 98 percent who were trustworthy.

Similarly, personnel officials told us that cooperative efforts among employees working alternative schedules are important, particularly when direct contact with other organizations or the public is required. An official at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Denver explained that one division, which includes a sales counter, must be staffed during customer service hours. That division allowed its employees to arrange their work schedules to ensure customer service hours were covered. At one of the cemeteries under the authority of the National Cemetery System (NCS),[12] burial crew employees worked a compressed schedule. Because the employees had to work together in doing their jobs, cooperation in scheduling nonworkdays was vital. As evidence of the importance of employee cooperation to AWS success, one organization we visited was forced to cancel its compressed schedule program because employees were unwilling to provide customer service coverage during other employees' absences.

The officials also stressed that an AWS program must be well planned and controlled if it is to work successfully and not cause an adverse impact on the agency. These officials suggested that, when initially introduced, the AWS program should be concrete and fully developed, and parameters should be set that tailor the program to the individual organization but at the same time allow employees as much flexibility over their work schedules as possible. The officials also said a training program that teaches supervisors and staff how an AWS program works and specifies their responsibilities is imperative and should be mandatory for participants in the program.

According to officials from several organizations, even when employees are allowed to vary their daily arrival times, most employees tended to work the same schedules every day. They said they had found that most employees were "creatures of habit" and adhered to the same schedules once these schedules were established. In fact, in the organizations with liberal AWS policies, only about half the employees who worked AWS chose the options with the greatest flexibility, such as a gliding schedule with credit hours or maxiflex. Because of considerations like commuting arrangements or child care needs, other employees preferred more traditional work schedules.

[12]NCS is an organization within VA.

## NPR Findings and Recommendation on AWS

In its September 1993 report entitled From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government That Works Better and Costs Less, the NPR[13] expressed concern about the federal government's limited use of family-friendly workplace options. According to the report, "Many agencies do not fully advocate or implement flexible work policies." Among other things, the report recommended that the President issue an executive order requiring all agencies to adopt AWS, part-time, and job sharing programs. At the time we prepared this report, the executive order had not yet been issued.

## Conclusions

The law has authorized the use of AWS for the federal workforce for many years, and large numbers of employees in many organizations are allowed to use them to help balance their working lives with their personal needs and family situations. However, many employees are not allowed to use AWS, and few organizations allow their employees to use the options offering the greatest flexibility, such as gliding schedules with credit hours or maxiflex.

More supportive management would make AWS more widely available to employees. In the organizations where managers were committed to addressing work/family issues, AWS programs tended to be more liberal. A supportive attitude cannot be mandated, but it is imperative to the success of any AWS program.

For the most part, we believe federal organizations would benefit by expanding the use of AWS. We believe it would make sense for all federal organizations to capitalize on the AWS program and use it to their advantage to attract and retain quality employees for the federal workforce.

Our findings clearly support the NPR's recommendation that the President, by executive order, require agencies to use AWS. If an executive order causes agencies to liberalize their AWS programs, employee use of AWS should increase.

## Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to the nine departments and agencies and met with personnel officials from each of them between November 15 and 22, 1993, to obtain their comments. The officials generally concurred with our findings and agreed that we accurately described their AWS

[13]The NPR, chaired by Vice President Al Gore, was tasked by the President in March 1993 to seek ways to improve federal government operations by "enhancing employees' ability to work better while, at the same time, reducing costs."

programs. They also offered updated information about their programs that we incorporated into the report.

Copies of this report are being sent to parties interested in federal employment matters and will be available to others on request.

The major contributors to this report are listed in appendix III. If you have any questions about this report, please call me on (202) 512-2928.

Nancy L. Kingsbury

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Director
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## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ACF | Administration for Children and Families |
| AFB | Air Force Base |
| AWS | Alternative Work Schedule |
| BIA | Bureau of Indian Affairs |
| BLM | Bureau of Land Management |
| BOM | Bureau of Mines |
| BOR | Bureau of Reclamation |
| DOI | Department of the Interior |
| DOT | Department of Transportation |
| EEOC | Equal Employment Opportunity Commission |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency |
| FAA | Federal Aviation Administration |
| FCA | Farm Credit Administration |
| FHWA | Federal Highway Administration |
| FRA | Federal Railroad Administration |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| FWS | Fish and Wildlife Service |
| HCFA | Health Care Financing Administration |
| HHS | Department of Health and Human Services |
| MARAD | Maritime Administration |
| MMS | Minerals Management Service |
| NCS | National Cemetery System |
| NHTSA | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration |
| NPR | National Performance Review |
| NPS | National Park Service |
| OPM | Office of Personnel Management |
| OSM | Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement |
| PHS | Public Health Service |
| RSPA | Research and Special Programs Administration |
| SEC | Securities and Exchange Commission |
| SSA | Social Security Administration |
| U.S.C. | United States Code |
| USGS | U.S. Geological Survey |
| VA | Department of Veterans Affairs |
| VBA | Veterans Benefits Administration |
| VHA | Veterans Health Administration |

Appendix I

# Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Our objectives were to determine what types of AWS federal agencies made available to their employees and to identify any limitations or restrictions imposed by the agencies on employee use of the AWS program.

Specifically, we reviewed selected departments' and agencies' experiences in administering the AWS program. We chose 9 departments and agencies for the study from 3 groups—small (fewer than 10,000 employees), medium (between 10,000 and 100,000 employees), and large (over 100,000 employees).[1] Each group contained one department or agency that reported to OPM[2] that many employees used AWS, one that reported that few employees used AWS, and one agency that fit an "other"[3] category.

We interviewed key personnel officials at (1) the department or agency level; (2) the headquarters of subordinate organizations (e.g., FAA within DOT); and (3) at least one regional office for each of the organizations that had personnel officials in the field. In total, we visited 59 organizations (see table I.1). We also discussed the AWS program with the manager of OPM's Work & Family Program Center.

At each organization, we reviewed AWS policies and discussed with personnel officials the kinds of AWS programs being used and the extent of employee participation.

Because our review did not cover all agencies, the results cannot be generalized to the government as a whole. However, the agencies selected represent a broad cross-section of federal employment and AWS policies being followed. Accordingly, we believe our review results provide a good indication of how the AWS program is being carried out in the government.

We did our work from July 1992 through November 1993 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

[1]Data obtained from OPM's Federal Civilian Workforce Statistics: Employment and Trends as of March 1992.

[2]Data obtained from OPM's Directory of Federal Agency Dependent Care Programs, July 1992.

[3]The "other" category included VA because we were interested in the use of AWS by employees in medical occupations; the DOI because it had a variety of missions within its bureaus and services; and FCA because it allowed all its employees to work compressed schedules but only during daylight savings time.

**Table I.1: Organizations Included in Our Review**

| Departments/agencies | Operating organizations |
|---|---|
| Department of the Air Force | Air Education and Training Command[a] |
| | Intelligence Command[a] |
| | Materiel Command[a] |
| Environmental Protection Agency[b] | |
| Equal Employment Opportunity Commission[c] | |
| Farm Credit Administration[c] | |
| Department of Health and Human Services[b] | Administration for Children and Families[b] |
| | Health Care Financing Administration[b] |
| | Public Health Service[b] |
| | Social Security Administration[b] |
| Department of the Interior | Bureau of Indian Affairs[c] |
| | Bureau of Land Management[d] |
| | Bureau of Mines[e] |
| | Bureau of Reclamation[d] |
| | Fish and Wildlife Service[e] |
| | Minerals Management Service[f] |
| | National Park Service[d] |
| | Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement[e] |
| | U.S. Geological Survey[e] |
| Securities and Exchange Commission[c] | |
| Department of Transportation | Coast Guard[d] |
| | Federal Aviation Administration[b] |
| | Federal Highway Administration[e] |
| | Federal Railroad Administration[c] |
| | Federal Transit Administration[c] |
| | Maritime Administration[c] |
| | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration[c] |
| | Research and Special Programs Administration[c] |

(continued)

| Departments/agencies | Operating organizations |
|---|---|
| Department of Veterans Affairs[g] | National Cemetery System[d] |
| | Veterans Benefits Administration[d] |
| | Veterans Health Administration[d] |

[a]Activities in Brooks, Kelly, Lackland, and Randolph AFBs, San Antonio area.

[b]Headquarters and Kansas City regional office.

[c]Headquarters only. Agency did not have personnel offices in its field activities.

[d]Headquarters and San Francisco regional office.

[e]Headquarters and Denver regional office.

[f]Headquarters and Los Angeles regional office.

[g]Medical facilities in Denver, Kansas City, San Antonio, and San Francisco.

# AWS Policies and Practices in 59 Federal Organizations

The following describes the AWS policies and practices we found in our visits to the 59 organizations included in our review. Individual organizations are discussed in alphabetical order under the department or agency of which they are a part. For example, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is discussed in the section on the Department of the Interior. Table II.1 on page 56 summarizes our findings.

## Department of the Air Force

Most units of the Air Force reported to 1 of 11 major commands. Our review included Air Force headquarters in Washington, D.C., and five units of three commands—Intelligence; Air Education and Training; and Materiel—in the San Antonio area.

The Air Force did not have a specific written AWS policy. Rather, it used OPM guidance, which provided suggestions to agencies on the administration of flexible and compressed work schedules as its departmental policy. Authority for implementing AWS was delegated to installation commanders.

### Headquarters

Headquarters employees were not allowed to have an AWS. In explaining the lack of flexibility permitted, an agency official said the employees worked on policy issues. He said policy work was not conducive to AWS because the employees needed to be consistently available during the same hours. Another official said that the small number of employees, as few as two, assigned to a number of offices was another reason AWS was not used in headquarters.

### Air Education and Training Command, Lackland AFB

The Lackland facility did not have a written AWS policy. Similar to headquarters, it used OPM guidance.

According to a command official, each major command has had authority to approve flexible or compressed work schedules since 1988. However, it was not until 1990 that any organization at Lackland approved AWS schedules. At that time, the civilian personnel office, whose employees were not union members, implemented both the 5-4/9 and the 4/10 compressed work schedules.

At the time of our visit, 55 employees worked in the personnel office; 42 worked a 5-4/9 schedule and 6 worked a 4/10 schedule. The other seven employees worked traditional schedules. Flexible schedules were not

authorized. The official said compressed schedules were favored because they made employees' work schedules more predictable and employees favored the extra day(s) off.

The approximately 2,750 other employees at Lackland were in bargaining units represented by a union. The union contracts did not provide for AWS. However, in June 1993, agreement was reached with the union for the nursing staff at the base's hospital to work a compressed schedule of six 12-hour days and one 8-hour day during each biweekly pay period. We were told that over one-third of the 650 nurses at the hospital used the compressed work schedule after it became available. According to an agency official, the compressed schedule had reduced overtime hours with no loss of productivity.

Negotiations were also under way to authorize compressed work schedules for other employees at the facility. However, the official said the negotiations were at an impasse in part because of disputes over how AWS would be implemented for these employees. However, he said there were no disagreements by the parties involved about the merits of adopting an AWS program.

According to the official, many of the base's organizations had mixtures of military personnel, nonunion civilians, and civilian employees represented by a union. He said it was difficult obtaining consensus among these groups on the types of AWS schedules to implement.

## Air Education and Training Command, Randolph AFB

Randolph employed approximately 3,500 civilian employees. Since 1982, the command has allowed most civilian employees to work flexitour schedules. Under this program, employees could establish working hours between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Employees could not earn credit hours.

Employees in one unit of the command who design, develop, and construct training devices have worked a 5-4/9 compressed schedule since 1980. According to command officials, this unit was self-contained and did not interact with other groups on the base. All 66 employees in the unit, including the military personnel, worked the same schedule. One Friday of the pay period was the 8-hour day, and the other was the nonworkday. According to the head of the unit, the program has always worked well.

In April 1993, another unit implemented a 5-4/9 compressed work schedule program for the unit's 27 employees. A personnel official indicated it was

sometimes difficult to coordinate work schedules, but there had been no problems interacting with other base functions. The official also said that the unit was able to expand its hours of operation because of the program. Another unit of approximately 50 employees had been approved for the 5-4/9 work schedule, but it was awaiting union acceptance before implementation.

A command official said he believes more employees were not allowed to use compressed work schedules because they need to interact with other base functions. In addition, he said higher level managers expected all employees to be responsive to their immediate needs, and this would be difficult under compressed schedules when, in many areas, only one employee with the necessary expertise would be available.

## Air Force Intelligence Command, Kelly AFB

Approximately 1,200 of the command's employees worked at Kelly. None of these employees were allowed to have AWS.

According to a command official, approximately 1,200 command employees worked at Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio. They were allowed to work flexible schedules for many years when the facility was part of another command, and the program was continued when the facility became part of the Intelligence Command. The official said these employees did work similar to that of employees at Kelly. He said over 90 percent of the employees at Wright-Patterson worked flexible schedules.

According to the official, Wright-Patterson was the only Intelligence Command facility to participate in AWS. He said AWS had not been made available at other locations because the last two commanders were reluctant to change work schedules without a clear showing that AWS would in some way significantly enhance accomplishing the command's work. He said an advisory council planned to reevaluate the possibility of establishing an AWS program at Kelly in about a year. However, he said a major reorganization was to occur in late 1993, and he believed AWS might not be seriously considered until the new organization was fully in place.

## Materiel Command, Brooks AFB

Of approximately 1,600 civilian employees at Brooks, about 150 employees in one directorate participated in AWS. They were allowed to work flexitour schedules. Under the flexitour program, credit hours were not allowed. All other employees were required to work traditional schedules.

Employees at Brooks do research in areas such as air space medicine and artificial intelligence. According to a command official, this kind of work does not lend itself well to AWS.

The official said one laboratory tested a 4/10 compressed schedule from April 1991 to July 1992. He said the employees liked the compressed schedule, and no production problems had arisen, but the test was canceled because of an increased workload assigned to the laboratory. The official said management believed the increased workload could be handled better with traditional work schedules.

## Materiel Command, Kelly AFB

The San Antonio Air Logistics Center at Kelly employed approximately 12,000 civilian employees. The facility required all employees to work 8-hour days. However, starting and ending times could be set within the flexible band of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Employees could extend their lunch times up to 2 hours for educational purposes, fitness programs, or other appropriate reasons and make up the difference at the end of the day, with the prior approval of their supervisors. Employees could also alter their preset arrival and departure times by 1 hour without supervisory approval. Nonunion employees could carry over a maximum of 16 credit hours, but union members were not allowed to earn credit hours. According to a center official, the flexitour program has worked well at Kelly because supervisors have always been able to ensure that sufficient numbers of employees were available to meet customers' needs during the established customer service hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Generally, the only employees not participating in the center's AWS program were those working in the industrial area on a production line operation. Center management determined this area was not suitable for AWS because management wanted all employees to be available during the same hours.

The center piloted a four 10-hour day compressed schedule in several units. However, because of downsizing, organization mergers, and other realignments, only two units were still testing the 4/10 schedule as of July 1993. A center evaluation of the compressed schedule test showed no substantial productivity improvements had occurred, but a definitive conclusion was not possible because other factors had influenced the indicators and the results were mixed. A center official said the center would probably not test any more compressed schedules until the organizational situation stabilized.

## Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had about 17,000 employees nationwide, including 6,000 located in headquarters. EPA headquarters and regional offices each developed their own AWS programs.

AWS was used extensively in EPA. Almost all EPA components implemented flexible schedule (flexitour) programs under the experiment allowed by the 1978 legislation and subsequently adopted compressed schedule programs as well. With few exceptions, the compressed schedule option used was the 5-4/9. EPA's field components have been using compressed schedules since the mid-1970s, and the headquarters offices have been participating since 1988. As of August 1992, over 60 percent of all EPA employees were working compressed schedules. In addition, employees at several of EPA's small research laboratories were allowed to work maxiflex schedules.

### Headquarters

According to the EPA handbook entitled Flexitime in EPA: A Handbook for Supervisors and Employees, the headquarters flexitour schedules program was implemented to (1) improve the quality of life for employees by giving them a new measure of freedom and control over their personal and work lives, (2) improve productivity through factors such as the elimination of tardiness by allowing employees to select their personal starting times and allowing employees to take advantage of "quiet" hours at the beginning or end of the day, and (3) increase service to other agencies and to the public through the use of staggered hours and a longer workday.

The headquarters' policy permitted employees working flexitour schedules to select hours of arrival and departure within a flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. EPA also had a customer band from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., when it guaranteed a full range of services to the public. Employees working a flexitour schedule could carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours.

All employees, except those designated "key",[1] such as staff office heads were eligible for the flexitour schedule program. However, key employees were allowed to set individual schedules that gave them the maximum practical amount of flexibility consistent with their duties.

Of the 12 components in EPA headquarters, 11 also allowed their employees the option of working compressed schedules. However, the

[1]Key designees were those employees whose duties required responsiveness at all hours of the workday to other EPA employees, federal officials, or the public.

components had somewhat different programs. Six had differing core hour requirements, and five did not have core hours at all. Eight allowed employees to take their compressed day off any time within the pay period, while three allowed only Mondays and Fridays as off days. In seven components, only full-time employees could work compressed schedules; the other four allowed both full- and part-time employees to participate. According to a headquarters personnel official, all employees not working compressed schedules were considered to be on flexitour schedules.

## Kansas City, Kansas, Regional Office

EPA's regional office had approximately 600 permanent full- and part-time employees. The region allowed both flexitour and compressed work schedules. Under both schedules, all employees were required to work during the core hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The public service hours were 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily.

The region's flexitour schedule program allowed employees to choose their starting times between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., with corresponding departure times 8-1/2 hours later. Unlike the headquarters program, regional employees could not earn credit hours.

The compressed work schedule used by the region was the 5-4/9 option. All permanent full- and part-time employees who worked at least 32 hours a week could participate. Under the program, employees could request starting times as early as 6:30 a.m. and departure times up to 6:00 p.m. Temporary employees were also included in the program to the extent possible. Employees working compressed schedules could request any day in the pay period as their day off. Approximately 75 percent of the employees in the region worked a compressed schedule.

According to a personnel official, all organizational units in the region had to participate in and could not withdraw from the compressed work schedule program.

## Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) had over 2,800 employees nationwide, including approximately 700 in its headquarters office. The EEOC AWS program included both flexible and compressed work schedules. Over 1,400 employees participated.

EEOC negotiated an overall AWS policy with its national union. Within the parameters of the national policy, local units negotiated their own policies covering such issues as core times, flexible time bands, grace periods for arrivals and departures, and off days. Nonunion employees were given the same options as those negotiated for union employees.

The EEOC flexible work schedule program offered employees two options—flexitour and gliding schedules. Both schedules split the workday into a flexible band and core time between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Flexitour allowed employees to select their arrival and departure times within a flexible band, but once workhours were selected, employees could not change them. The gliding schedule, on the other hand, allowed employees to vary their arrival times each day. Both flexible schedule options permitted employees to earn and carry over 4 credit hours.

Under the compressed schedule program, full-time employees could work a 5-4/9 or a 4/10 schedule. Similar to flexible work schedules, both compressed schedules included a flexible time band and core time. According to an agency official, only one headquarters office worked a 4/10 schedule.

Under the overall AWS policy, each headquarters and district or field office could generally select one flexible and one compressed work schedule program for its employees. To encourage managers to support the AWS program, EEOC required the chairman's written approval of any unit's decision to exclude its employees from program participation. An agency official told us that over the years, a few units had considered terminating AWS but they all were able to overcome their difficulties and retain the programs.

An agency official said the AWS program is working well in EEOC, and no office has reported problems such as employee abuse or an overall reduction in productivity. In addition, the official told us that supervisory and management officials, who were excluded from the AWS program, had increasingly expressed their desire to participate in AWS.

## Farm Credit Administration

The Farm Credit Administration (FCA) employed about 440 staff members. Farm Credit had a centralized AWS policy that applied to all headquarters and field employees in the agency. It included a flexitour program and a 5-4/9 compressed schedule program; both were initially adopted in 1983.

Under the flexitour program, employees could select their arrival and departure times within a flexible band of 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Credit hours were not allowed. The core period, when all employees had to be present, was 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and all units had to be operational during the customer service hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. According to an agency official, the flexitour program has always worked well.

We were told by an agency official that a newly appointed chairman terminated the compressed schedule program in 1986 because he did not think such schedules were appropriate. In 1987, a 5-4/9 compressed schedule was reinstated but limited to agency examiners at GM-14 levels and below who traveled at least half the time. Examiners represent about 57 percent of the agency's workforce. In 1991, 5-4/9 compressed schedules were again allowed for all other full-time employees. However, under the 1991 program, these employees were allowed to work compressed schedules only between April and October—daylight savings time. During the other months of the year, these employees had to return to traditional or flexitour schedules. About 95 percent of all full-time employees worked compressed schedules during April through October.

Managers and supervisors had to schedule either the first Friday or the second Monday of the pay period as their nonworkday. However, other employees could schedule their nonworkday for any Monday or Friday.

According to an FCA official, compressed work schedules caused strong emotions among the agency's managers. The official said a few managers strongly favored compressed schedules; some strongly disliked them; and most were lukewarm, at best, in their support of the program. Hence, the "on/off" policy was considered to be a reasonable compromise to accommodate all views.

When a new chairman was appointed in August 1993, he implemented a year-round compressed schedule program for all full-time managers and employees effective November 1993. According to an agency official, the new chairman saw that the summer compressed schedule program provided employees the opportunity to arrange work schedules more suited to their personal needs without sacrificing the efficiency of the agency's operations. A personnel official said that without the change in leadership, a year-round program would not have been implemented.

## Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) responsibilities were administered by its four operating organizations—Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), Public Health Service (PHS), and Social Security Administration (SSA). The AWS policies and practices followed at the departmental level and the operating organizations, including the regional offices we visited, are discussed below.

### HHS Headquarters

The Office of the Secretary employed approximately 2,250 workers. According to an HHS official, over 1,000 of the employees participated in AWS.

Under agreements negotiated with the employee union, flexitour and compressed schedule programs were available to union employees in the Office of the Secretary.[2] The flexitour schedule program permitted employees to vary the times they arrived and departed work within a flexible band of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Employees working flexitour schedules could also earn and carry over up to 20 credit hours. The compressed schedule program was limited to the 5-4/9 option. Employees could begin work between 6:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on the 9-hour days and between 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. on the 8-hour day.

A much more limited AWS program was available to some nonunion employees. They could work flexitour schedules, but credit hours were not allowed. However, they could not work compressed schedules.

Implementation of the headquarters AWS policy was delegated to the various assistant secretaries, and the offices of the Inspector General, Civil Rights, and General Counsel in the Office of the Secretary. Each of these units implemented AWS in a different manner. For example, the Inspector General's office allowed its employees to work flexitour schedules only, while employees in the Offices of Civil Rights and the Assistant Secretary for Personnel Administration could work flexitour or compressed schedules. Employees in the Office of Consumer Affairs had fixed work schedules of 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily, unless they were able to arrange AWS in individual written agreements with their supervisors.

[2]Flexitour and compressed schedules have been available to union employees since 1985. Flexitour schedules have been available to nonunion employees since 1986.

## HHS Kansas City, Missouri, Regional Office

The AWS program for the Kansas City regional office applied to regional employees of the Office of the Secretary, PHS, ACF, and HCFA, and some SSA employees. Approximately 300 employees were eligible to participate in the region's AWS program. The majority of SSA employees in the region were covered under a separate arrangement that is discussed on page 30.

Under the region's AWS program, employees could choose a flexitour program or the 5-4/9 compressed schedule program. The flexitour program allowed employees to vary their daily arrival and departure times within a flexible band of 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The core hours were 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Regional office employees working either flexitour or traditional schedules could earn up to 20 credit hours each pay period and carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours. Employees were allowed to use credit hours to work a de facto compressed schedule. Employees in field offices could not earn credit hours. Under the 5-4/9 compressed schedule program, employees could vary their daily arrival and departure times within the established flexible band. However, once established, these schedules could not be changed without supervisory approval.

## ACF

ACF employed about 1,100 people, including about 600 in headquarters. Its AWS program included both gliding schedules and 5-4/9 compressed schedules. The AWS program was negotiated with the union for bargaining unit employees. Some features were also made available to other employees.

The gliding schedule program included a flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Employees could change their arrival and departure times each day if they desired. The program allowed employees to earn up to 2 credit hours each regular workday and up to 8 hours during work on weekends and holidays, to a maximum of 16 hours each pay period. The compressed schedule program also allowed employees to vary their daily arrival and departure times within the flexible bands. The nonworkdays had to be on Mondays or Fridays.

Nonunion employees were allowed to work gliding schedules. However, some could not earn credit hours or participate in the compressed schedule program.

## HCFA

HCFA had approximately 4,000 employees nationwide, with about 2,800 of these employees in the headquarters office.

## Headquarters

Employees in HCFA's headquarters offices could participate in either a gliding schedule program or a 5-4/9 compressed schedule program.

The gliding schedule program was implemented in 1984. Employees could vary their arrival times each day within the flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., although some employees were allowed to begin work as early as 6:30 a.m. Core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Since May 1991, program participants have been allowed to earn up to 2 credit hours a day, with a maximum carryover of 24 hours.

HCFA called its 5-4/9 compressed schedule the "extended flex program." It was implemented in February 1987. Unlike a regular compressed work schedule, the extended flex program allowed employees to vary their daily arrival and departure times within the same flexible band established under the gliding schedule program. Credit hours were not allowed. We were told by officials that the objective of the extended flex program was to increase employee morale and improve productivity because management believed the benefits from employee participation in the program far outweighed any inconveniences it might cause the agency.

According to an agency official, about 95 percent of the employees participated in one of the AWS programs. The official also said that employees not participating in AWS generally were those employees whose work was of a critical nature and required their presence each day during regular working hours.

## PHS

PHS employed approximately 52,725 staff nationwide, including approximately 950 people in headquarters.

## Headquarters

PHS' AWS program included gliding schedules and a 5-4/9 compressed schedule. According to personnel officials, most employees worked gliding schedules.

Under the gliding schedule program, the flexible band was 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Employees could earn a maximum of 12 credit hours each pay period and carry over a maximum of 24 hours. All full-time union employees were eligible to participate in the 5-4/9 compressed schedule program, but nonunion employees could participate only with the approval of their office directors. Employees working the 5-4/9 schedule could arrive at work as early as 6:30 a.m., but

once their schedules were set, they had to maintain the same arrival and departure times and take the same day off each pay period.

## SSA

SSA employed about 65,000 people nationwide, including about 15,000 employees in the headquarters offices. A personnel official said that approximately 50,000 SSA employees participated in the AWS program.

SSA began to experiment with the concept of flexible work schedules in the mid-1970s and authorized them for all headquarters offices in 1978. A compressed schedule program was added in 1990.

Several SSA offices had separate memoranda of understanding with employee unions covering AWS programs. For example, the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Program Service Center, Data Operations Centers, field offices and teleservice centers, and the Office of Regional Program and Integrity Reviews all had separate union contracts describing how their AWS programs were to operate.

### SSA Headquarters

Headquarters employees could work either gliding schedules or 5-4/9 compressed schedules. In addition, a small number of employees in one office could work a 4/10 compressed schedule. Employees on gliding schedules could earn up to 12 credit hours each pay period and carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours. Supervisors were expected to approve employee requests to work 5-4/9 compressed schedules but could not allow more than 10 percent of employees on such schedules to be off on the same day. After consideration of operational needs, conflicts in nonworkday requests were to be resolved in favor of employees with the earliest service computation dates.

In SSA headquarters, each unit head could determine the flexible band and core hours that would be used within the hours of 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Unit heads were expected to ensure sufficient employee coverage at all times to accomplish the work and to ensure employees had adequate supervision.

### SSA Kansas City Regional Office

The region employed about 3,600 people in its various district, branch, and field offices. The regional office established AWS policies for its nonunion employees and negotiated policies for union employees not covered by the HHS regional office AWS program.

Most SSA units in the region had flexitour schedules and a 5-4/9 compressed schedule. However, a number of differences existed among the units. For example, employees in the district and branch offices could not earn credit hours under the flexitour program. For the most part, the other employees in the regional offices could earn and carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours under the flexitour program, but the number of hours they could earn during any pay period varied from 10 to 24, depending upon where they were assigned. In addition, two units allowed employees working 5-4/9 compressed schedules to vary their arrival and departure times within the established flexible schedule band. Flexible working hours were not allowed for other regional employees working 5-4/9 compressed schedules. Staff attorneys in the region were allowed to work gliding schedules with credit hours, or 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedules, under their negotiated union agreement.

A regional official told us the region's position was that all employees were eligible to participate in the AWS program. However, he acknowledged that some unit managers had decided not to allow their employees to participate fully. For example, employees working in the computer operations area were not allowed to have flexitour or compressed schedules because of the tight time frames involved in their work. The only flexibility they were allowed was to earn and use credit hours.

## Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) carries out its responsibilities through a number of organizations, including the Office of the Secretary, other departmental offices, and the following bureaus and services: (1) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), (2) Bureau of Land Management (BLM), (3) Bureau of Mines (BOM), (4) Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), (5) Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), (6) Minerals Management Service (MMS), (7) National Park Service (NPS), (8) Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), and (9) U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Most of the organizations were headquartered in the DOI building in Washington, D.C.

We obtained information on AWS policies from the departmental level headquarters offices of each of the bureaus and services and from the regional offices we visited.

### Headquarters/Office of the Secretary

The Department used OPM guidance, along with departmental instructions, as its AWS policy. The AWS policy allowed most headquarters employees to

work flexitour, gliding schedules, or 5-4/9 compressed schedules. In addition, one office allowed employees to work 4/10 compressed schedules, and one office allowed employees on travel status to work maxiflex and carry over 10 credit hours. However, the headquarters units were not required to allow their employees to participate in AWS, and some units chose not to allow participation in either the flexible or compressed schedule program. Credit hours were not allowed under the flexitour or gliding schedule programs.

According to an agency official, many managers in the Office of the Secretary did not believe AWS was appropriate for headquarters employees. Yet, the official said employee interest in work schedule flexibility was high, and AWS was viewed favorably in units where it was allowed. Also, the official said several units were considering implementing AWS.

## BIA

BIA employed approximately 14,000 people nationwide, including about 410 in the headquarters offices. We did not review AWS practices in any BIA area offices.

BIA negotiated a bureauwide AWS policy agreement with an employee union. The agreement authorized both flexible and compressed schedules. Regional offices and other BIA units could select from among six work schedule options included in the agreement.

The six agreement options included (1) traditional 8-hour schedules or official business hours; (2) flexitour schedules whereby employees worked 8 hours each day, but had set arrival and departure times; (3) gliding 8-hour schedules whereby employees could vary their daily arrival and departure times within a flexible band; (4) maxiflex schedules whereby employees could complete the 80-hour pay period in fewer than 10 days by earning and carrying over up to 24 credit hours; (5) 5-4/9 compressed schedules; and (6) 4/10 compressed schedules. Credit hours could be earned only under the maxiflex program.

Most headquarters employees were limited to the flexitour option, and no credit hours were allowed. Less than 10 percent of BIA headquarters employees were authorized to work 5-4/9 compressed schedules, and no headquarters employees were allowed to work 4/10 compressed schedules. The personnel official told us that, for the most part, BIA headquarters units did not authorize compressed schedules because managers did not like these schedules.

## BLM

BLM employed approximately 10,000 permanent employees nationwide, including approximately 400 in headquarters.

BLM implemented an AWS policy in July 1990 that allowed flexible and compressed work schedules. The flexible schedule program policy allowed the gliding, variable day, variable week, and maxiflex options. Compressed schedule options were the 5-4/9 and 4/10. In addition to allowing employees to select which schedules they would work, the policy also allowed management to require employees to convert to AWS, if necessary, for work-related reasons.

The AWS policy recommended that units use a flexible band of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and a core time of 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., excluding lunch. The policy allowed employees on flexible schedules to carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours from pay period to pay period and to use their credit hours to vary the length of the workday or workweek.

### BLM Headquarters

Headquarters employees could work a maxiflex schedule or a 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedule. A personnel official told us that most employees (about 370) worked maxiflex schedules so they could earn credit hours, and about 25 worked compressed schedules. A BLM official said the AWS program was a helpful employee recruitment and retention tool. According to the official, BLM headquarters employees generally worked on policy matters, which the official thought was particularly conducive to work schedule flexibility because the employees were not dependent on other employee groups. The official added that a few employees did not work AWS because they (1) had heavy workload requirements, (2) were being disciplined by management, or (3) preferred to work traditional schedules.

### BLM Sacramento State Office

BLM employed approximately 1,000 people in California, including about 300 at the Sacramento state office. All the flexible work schedules allowed under BLM's AWS policy were allowed in the state office. All employees, including top management, could participate in the AWS program.

A personnel official said that more than half the employees used AWS. The majority were on maxiflex schedules, a large number worked 5-4/9 compressed schedules, and a few worked 4/10 compressed schedules. The remaining employees worked traditional schedules. Although employees could vary their daily arrival and departure times, the official said that most employees tended to work the same hours each day. Supervisors were encouraged to cross-train staff to provide backup for employees on

their nonworkdays. The official told us that employees had become "self-policing" and reported employees they suspected were abusing the program.

The personnel official said the state director was a progressive manager who was very interested in looking at new issues, listening to employees, and making necessary changes. The official said the office valued workforce diversity and believed giving employees choices in their work schedules helped them better accommodate their family responsibilities.

## Bureau of Mines

The Bureau of Mines (BOM) employed about 2,000 persons. Its headquarters personnel office developed the BOM AWS policy that all BOM offices had to follow, unless deviations were approved by headquarters.

BOM policy allowed most employees to use gliding schedules but did not authorize credit hours. However, six field offices received approval for their employees to earn credit hours. Of the approximately 2,000 BOM employees nationwide, about 1,900 worked gliding schedules.

### BOM Headquarters

Headquarters employees have been able to work gliding schedules since 1979. Under this program, employees could arrive and leave work any time during the flexible band of 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. as long as they accounted for a full 8 hours of work or took approved leave. Employees could vary their schedules day by day without prior supervisory approval. Core hours were 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The official office hours were 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

In June 1993, headquarters started a 1-year test of a 5-4/9 compressed schedule. Of the 440 employees in headquarters, over 230 were participating in the test. All other employees worked gliding schedules.

### BOM Denver Field Office

In the 1970s, the Denver office participated in the government's AWS experiment. During the experiment, employees were allowed to work maxiflex, gliding schedules, or 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules to help cut down on traffic congestion during peak commuting times. Subsequently, all programs but gliding schedules were terminated because of management's concern that supervisors could not properly control employees' work schedules under more flexible approaches. An office official explained that it was difficult to have supervisors present during all the various duty hours employees could have, and management's view

was that many employees would abuse their work schedules if they were not supervised.

Under the gliding schedule program, the flexible band was 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Core hours were 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and credit hours were not allowed. Most of the approximately 375 employees in the Denver office were eligible for the gliding schedule program.

However, one unit, whose employees worked in remote locations, received permission to use a 5-4/9 compressed schedule. We were told by the personnel official that the unit was pleased with the schedule because it helped to decrease overtime pay.

An office official said some units had asked about adding credit hours to the gliding schedule program. The personnel office responded by citing the following difficulties it associated with credit hours: (1) determining how and when credit hours could be taken to ensure adequate office coverage, (2) ensuring the presence of a supervisor to monitor and verify that employees worked late to earn credit hours, (3) avoiding labor relations entanglements during implementation, (4) understanding the use of credit hours when employees were traveling or in training, and (5) system abuses.

In October 1993, the Denver regional office implemented a gliding schedule program with credit hours. Under this program, employees could carry over up to 24 credit hours and use them to vary the length of a subsequent workday or workweek.

## Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) was headquartered in Denver. It had about 8,000 employees nationwide, including 2,000 in the Denver area.

### BOR Headquarters

The AWS policy authorized both gliding and compressed schedule programs. The gliding schedule allowed employees to vary their daily arrival and departure times within a flexible band of 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., except where different arrival times were established because of operational requirements. Core hours were 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Employees could earn and carry over up to 24 credit hours. Under the compressed schedule program, employees could work a 5-4/9 schedule with fixed arrival and departure times and a fixed nonworkday.

Of the 2,000 employees, about 1,900 worked gliding schedules, and about 100 worked 5-4/9 compressed schedules. We were told by a BOR official that some employees would like to work a 5-4/9 compressed schedule and still be allowed gliding time and credit hours; however, the statute does not permit this. Employees on the gliding schedule could effectively work out such a plan with their supervisors through the use of credit hours, but employees preferred to have it as an established choice. The personnel official said that some supervisors did not like to arrange de facto compressed schedules, preferring the employees work a 5-4/9 schedule under the compressed schedule program. In this way, the employees' work schedules were fixed.

Offices had to meet specific BOR criteria if they wanted to terminate a person or a group from the AWS program. Terminations had to be based on operational need, cost effectiveness, or abuse. A BOR official said AWS had great potential as a recruitment tool, and its availability was mentioned in vacancy announcements. The official said BOR tried to accommodate employees' preferred work schedules as much as possible.

According to the BOR official, the agency believed AWS programs were very important in today's society and fully supported AWS as a means to accommodate employee and management needs. The official said BOR had not seen any evidence of abuse any greater than under any other work schedule program. He said most supervisors liked or at least accepted AWS, although a few feared loss of control under AWS and preferred the traditional arrangement whereby all employees worked 8 hours at the same time.

To gain acceptance and understanding of the AWS program, the BOR official told us that extensive training was provided to employees and supervisors before the program was implemented. The training described supervisor and employee responsibilities and helped them comprehend the program's parameters.

## BOR Sacramento Regional Office

The Sacramento region had approximately 800 employees; half were in the regional office and half were in field locations.

In 1991, the regional office implemented a gliding schedule with credit hours. The regional program used the same flexible band and core hours as did headquarters. The regional program also allowed employees to use their credit hours to effectively work 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedules with supervisory approval.

According to a regional official, the office trusts its employees and believes the AWS program helps reward good employees for the work they do. He said the impetus for implementing AWS was the arrival of new management that wanted to make the region a better workplace and help employees accommodate their work/family responsibilities.

Over 600 of the region's employees participated in the AWS program. However, one union did not want its members to earn credit hours, so approximately 170 employees were excluded. A regional evaluation of the AWS program revealed that other employees were not participating for personal reasons, such as car pool and child care arrangements or outside commitments.

## Fish and Wildlife Service

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) employed about 9,500 people nationwide, about 650 of whom were in headquarters.

### FWS Headquarters

The headquarters AWS policy authorized individual units to implement gliding and compressed schedules. Some units allowed their employees to work gliding schedules, some allowed 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedules, and some did not allow work schedule flexibility. Credit hours could not be earned. According to FWS officials, headquarters units generally had small staffs and allowing compressed schedules would not provide adequate coverage for the office. Of the 293 employees participating in AWS, 107 used gliding schedules and 186 used compressed schedules.

An FWS official said more employees would probably participate in AWS if it were more widely offered.

### FWS Denver Regional Office

The regional office employed about 1,250 people in 8 states, including about 260 located in the Denver area.

The office allowed most employees to work either a flexitour or a 5-4/9 compressed work schedule. The flexitour program had three tours of duty from which employees could select: (1) 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., (2) 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and (3) 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The flexitour program also allowed employees to extend their lunch periods up to 1 hour and add the extra time at the end of the day—no credit hours were allowed.

The 5-4/9 compressed schedule has been allowed since the mid-1970s. It required employees to limit their schedules to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with no extension of their lunch periods. An office official said

the building lease did not provide for services, such as heating or janitorial support, before 7:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. Thus, additional hours of operation would be an added cost to the office.

The official said managers have learned to accommodate the 5-4/9 schedule by scheduling meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, when most employees were at work. Of the Denver regional employees who participated in the AWS program, over 100 worked a flexitour schedule, and nearly 100 worked a 5-4/9 schedule.

## Minerals Management Service

MMS employed approximately 2,000 employees nationwide, including about 440 at headquarters. The personnel official told us that virtually all employees worked some form of AWS.

### MMS Headquarters

Most headquarters employees were allowed to work gliding or 5-4/9 compressed schedules. Gliding schedules have been available since 1982, and compressed schedules were authorized in 1989. Under the gliding schedule program, the flexible band was 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and the core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Credit hours were not allowed. Under the compressed schedule program, eligible employees could select arrival and departure times between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Nonworkdays were staggered throughout the pay period; however, no more than 20 percent of the employees could be off on any given day.

### MMS Camarillo, California, Area Office

The Camarillo area office employed about 120 people. Most employees in the area office were allowed to work flexitour or compressed schedules.

Under the flexitour program, the flexible and core hours were the same as at headquarters. No credit hours were allowed. The compressed schedule program included both the 5-4/9 and 4/10 options. Employees primarily selected Mondays or Fridays as their nonworkday.

## National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) had about 12,000 employees nationwide, approximately 5,000 of whom participated in an AWS program.

### Headquarters

An NPS handbook entitled Alternative Work Schedules in the National Park Service, A Handbook for Supervisors described the AWS program available to NPS employees. It presented a variety of options from which employees could choose.

Three flexible schedule options, flexitour, gliding schedule, and maxiflex, were available. Under flexitour, employees could select their arrival and departure times from a set, written schedule. Once selected, the times were fixed and could not vary from day to day. Under the gliding schedule, employees could vary their daily arrival and departure times within a flexible band. The flexible band was 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Each day had a set core period during which all employees had to be present. The maxiflex schedule was similar to the gliding schedule, but it also allowed employees to earn and carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours. The 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules were also available. Credit hours were allowed only under the maxiflex program.

We were told that NPS was very supportive of AWS and encouraged its use. According to the handbook, "an employee should be given the opportunity to demonstrate that he/she is responsible enough to follow the AWS' rules.' However, if the employee then demonstrates irresponsibility, the supervisor should take immediate action to correct the abuse or cancel the employee's schedule altogether." In addition, the handbook stated, "a supervisor may assign any employee to an alternative schedule if the needs of the Service/organization are better served by the change."

Most of the approximately 550 employees in NPS headquarters had all the AWS options available to them. According to an agency official, the most prevalent work schedule in headquarters was the 5-4/9 compressed schedule.

### NPS San Francisco Regional Office

The San Francisco regional office was responsible for administering the national park system in the western part of the country, as well as certain natural and historical landmark and archeological programs. Excluding the summer months, about 2,200 people worked in the region, including about 200 in the regional headquarters.

Employees in the regional office had to work either a traditional 8-hour schedule or a maxiflex schedule. Under maxiflex, employees could work up to 11-1/2 hours a day, carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours, and vary their daily arrival and departure times. According to a regional official, nearly all regional office employees opted to use maxiflex. He added that employees often did not use all the flexibility allowed by the program and tended to work the same hours every day.

The official said the only problem that had been experienced with maxiflex was adjusting to the timekeeping requirements involved when

employees worked varying numbers of hours each day and earned credit hours. He said the timekeeping difficulties diminished greatly as the region became more familiar with the program.

The region permitted employees in parks and offices to use any or all of the AWS schedules authorized in the NPS handbook. However, we were told that the predominant AWS programs used in the parks were 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules. According to the regional official, these fixed schedules were more compatible with providing needed services to the public.

At the time of our review, about 260 regional employees worked maxiflex schedules; over 700 worked a 5-4/9 schedule, and about 170 worked a 4/10 schedule. The regional official speculated that other employees did not participate in AWS because either their local management had determined that work requirements made it unfeasible or the employees themselves had decided to continue using traditional schedules.

## Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) had about 1,060 employees nationwide, including about 240 headquarters personnel. According to an agency official, about 600 employees worked alternative work schedules.

In 1988, OSM initiated an AWS pilot whereby employees could work a flexitour or compressed schedule. Under flexitour, employees could select their arrival and departure times during a flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Once the times were selected, participating employees had to adhere to the same schedules. In 1989, the flexitour program was expanded to allow employees to carry over up to 10 credit hours. By using credit hours, employees were able to vary the length of their workdays or their workweeks.

Under the pilot compressed schedule, employees could choose to work either a 5-4/9 or 4/10 option. With supervisory approval, employees could designate any day in the pay period as their nonworkday. The pilot AWS policy also allowed supervisors to assign employees to AWS if it suited the needs of the organization.

According to an evaluation of the pilot program completed in 1990, the AWS program was successful and should be continued. The evaluation concluded that one of the most compelling reasons to continue the

program was the positive impact it had on employee morale. However, the evaluation also showed there had been occasions, especially on Mondays and Fridays, when employees were not available when needed. This difficulty was found to apply mostly to senior officials and other headquarters staff office heads, and the program was modified to exclude their participation.

### OSM Headquarters

Most headquarters employees were authorized to participate in the flexitour and compressed work schedules. Of the 300 employees in headquarters, 159 worked a 5-4/9 schedule and 36 worked a 4/10 schedule. All other employees worked either flexitour or traditional schedules.

According to a headquarters official, most employees had positive views of the program; however, careful management was necessary to make the program work well.

### OSM Western Support Center

The Western Support Center of OSM was located in Denver.

All employees in the center could work flexitour or compressed schedules. Under the flexitour policy, up to 10 credit hours could be earned. According to a center official, few employees earned credit hours under the flexitour program because the center required a mission-related reason for employees to work beyond their regular hours of duty. Of the 243 employees at the center, 114 worked a flexitour schedule, 118 worked 5-4/9 compressed schedules, and 11 worked 4/10 compressed schedules.

According to the center official, the center used the AWS program as a recruiting tool. He also said the employees tended to police the program themselves because they viewed AWS as a privilege, and they didn't want to lose it through employee abuse.

One office at the center used a local area network system to schedule leave, travel, and training. We were told this system also helped managers to accommodate the AWS programs because they could use the network to determine when employees were available so they could schedule meetings. The center official felt such a network system was particularly useful to small organizations in managing the AWS program.

## U.S. Geological Survey

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) employed 10,000 persons nationwide, including over 2,000 in headquarters. Most employees were eligible for the AWS program.

### Headquarters

USGS has had a gliding schedule program since 1976. In 1984, a credit hour feature was added, allowing employees to carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours. However, employees were not allowed to use credit hours to work de facto 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedules. The flexible band was 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and the core hours were 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

According to an agency official, employees have occasionally inquired about the possibility of adding a compressed work schedule to the AWS program, but management has not been amenable to such a change.

### USGS Denver Regional Office

The region employed approximately 3,000 people, and it used a gliding schedule with credit hours.

With supervisory approval, employees could earn credit hours when circumstances supported continuing work beyond the regular workday. Employees could carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours but could not use credit hours to work de facto 5-4/9 or 4/10 work schedules.

An official noted that the region's mapping division had a sales counter that had to be staffed during specific hours. The official said employees in the division arranged their schedules to ensure customer service hours were covered.

Also, the official said most employees tended to work the same schedules every day, despite having the option to vary them daily.

## Securities and Exchange Commission

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) had approximately 2,600 employees in its headquarters and regional offices. We only visited SEC headquarters because the agency administered its AWS program centrally and had no personnel offices in its regions.

SEC's AWS program was implemented in 1983, and the program was initially limited to flexitour schedules. Employees were allowed to establish working hours within a flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The flexitour program was available to a limited number of SEC employees, and no credit hours were allowed. Agencywide, division directors and office heads were allowed to approve no more than 15 percent of employee requests to participate in the program. Managers were instructed to give priority to those employees with dependent care, transportation, or educational needs in determining which requests to

approve. Managers could also request special approval from the executive director to exceed the 15-percent limitation in hardship situations or direct other employees to change their schedules if telephone coverage or other work was required beyond their normal duty hours.

In November 1991, SEC expanded the AWS program to include a 5-4/9 compressed schedule option for employees in its operations center. Mondays and Fridays were designated as allowable nonworkdays, and employees had to schedule their days off in advance. In November 1992, a second component, the printing and facilities plant, requested approval for a compressed schedule to allow it to expand service hours and decrease overtime costs. The request was approved on the basis that the component's work and staffing patterns were amenable to compressed schedules.

Of the approximately 2,600 full-time employees in SEC, 425 worked flexitour schedules and 110 worked compressed schedules.

## Department of Transportation

We visited the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Office of the Secretary and eight of its component agencies—Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Maritime Administration (MARAD), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA). We visited the headquarters offices of each organization and certain field offices of the Coast Guard, FAA, and FHWA because these organizations had personnel offices in their field offices.

DOT first implemented an AWS program in 1979. It included both flexible and compressed schedules. However, we were told that subsequent top level DOT management disliked the program and terminated it DOT-wide in 1982. In 1988, DOT management decided to reinstate AWS, and each DOT organization was authorized to have an AWS program if specific criteria were met.

Before implementing AWS, each DOT agency was required to ensure that its program complied with a DOT directive on AWS issued in June 1990. The directive required the agencies to demonstrate that AWS would result in significant personnel and operational benefits and have no adverse impact on agency operations. For example, the directive required implementation of AWS to save at least 5 percent of the agency's operating budget before it

could be implemented. A further requirement specified annual reviews of AWS programs and termination of any programs failing to meet the criteria.

At the time of our review, we were told that about 51,000 of DOT's workforce of 68,500 employees were eligible to participate in some form of AWS.

In November 1993, DOT implemented a more liberal AWS policy and delegated approval of AWS programs to the heads of its operating administrations. Under the new AWS policy, the operating administrations could implement any of the AWS options allowed by law, as long as the schedules had no adverse impact on the work of the organization. The personnel officials from the operating administrations told us that their organizations planned to expand their AWS programs in calendar year 1994.

## Headquarters/Office of the Secretary

The Office of the Secretary's AWS policy allowed most employees to work flexitour schedules within the flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and earning credit hours was not permitted.

The Office of Inspector General within the Office of the Secretary had a separate AWS policy. It allowed employees to work a 5-4/9 compressed schedule upon written request. Employees could select arrival times between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. and leave work 9-1/2 hours later. Days off had to be Monday or Friday, but no more than 25 percent of the employees could be off on the same day.

## Coast Guard

The Coast Guard employed about 5,000 civilian employees nationwide, including 1,200 in headquarters.

### Coast Guard Headquarters

All headquarters personnel were eligible for flexitour schedules. The program required employees to work 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, but they could establish their working hours any time between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. No credit hours were permitted.

To help with energy conservation efforts, the Coast Guard placed all headquarters employees on a 4/10 compressed schedule in the late 1970s. The office was closed every Friday. A Coast Guard official said that, after a period of time, compressed schedules were canceled to ensure operating

hours matched customer service requests. Thereafter, headquarters employees were allowed to work flexitour schedules only.

## Coast Guard Maintenance and Logistics Command, Pacific

The Coast Guard Maintenance and Logistics Command, Pacific, was headquartered in Alameda, California. The command employed approximately 1,000 people in Alameda and throughout the Pacific area. According to a command official, most employees were eligible for flexitour and 5-4/9 compressed schedules.

The command began using flexitour schedules in the 1980s. Similar to headquarters, credit hours were not permitted. In 1990, the command received approval to experiment with compressed schedules. The experiment started in August 1990 at three command locations. It allowed employees to work 5-4/9[3] schedules and choose either a Monday or Friday as their nonworkday.

An evaluation of the first year's experience under the experiment showed that supervisors and employees overwhelmingly supported the program. In January 1992, the program was made permanent. In a July 1992 report to the Coast Guard Commandant, the command said it continued to receive only positive comments about the program. The report said the most beneficial aspects of the program were the savings in commuting time and costs, its use as a positive recruitment tool, and the command's enhanced ability to serve its customers.

## FAA

The FAA had the most liberal AWS policy in DOT. Of approximately 55,000 FAA employees nationwide, about 32,000 participated in AWS.

Since March 1991, FAA has allowed its nonunion employees to use the AWS options available under the statute. However, the AWS program could vary by organizational unit because each regional administrator, air traffic manager, and associate administrator was allowed to determine the basic program parameters for the units reporting directly to them.

As a result of union negotiations, union employees in several FAA organizations began experimenting with various types of AWS schedules in 1989. For example, air traffic controllers at 45 air traffic facilities were allowed to work 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules in a study of how compressed schedules would affect controller performance. During the

[3]Employees in Valdez, Alaska, could work six 12-hour days and one 8-hour day each pay period. Employees in Port Angeles, Washington, could work four 10-hour days each week.

study, which was still in progress at the time of our review, other air traffic facilities were permitted to work a variety of flexible schedules. In all air traffic facilities, unions and management negotiated local agreements on who could participate in AWS and which type of schedules would be permitted.

FAA officials told us that, in general, the AWS program had been very well received in the air traffic facilities. Of all the air traffic facilities that used AWS, only one or two returned to a traditional 8-hour schedule.

According to an air traffic management survey completed in 1991, the AWS program decreased overtime costs, reduced sick leave usage, and improved employee morale. The survey found AWS had no effect on such factors as the level of service provided, employee recruitment, and the ability to avoid operational difficulties, i.e., errors and accidents.

## FAA Headquarters

According to an FAA directive dated May 1992, the AWS program offered headquarters employees was intended to enhance operational efficiency, promote FAA program goals, and enrich the employees' ability to meet both their professional and personal responsibilities. The stated AWS program objective was to provide benefits to management, the general public, and employees. Of approximately 4,000 headquarters employees, about 2,350 participated in AWS.

Employees at headquarters could work flexible or compressed schedules. Under the flexible schedule program, most employees had their choice, subject to supervisory approval, of flexitour, gliding schedule, variable day, variable week, or maxiflex. The flexible band was 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Employees on flexible schedules could earn up to 2 credit hours each day and carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours from pay period to pay period.

The compressed schedule program included the 5-4/9 and 4/10 options. Once employees selected their arrival and departure times and nonworkday(s), their schedules were fixed until their supervisors approved changes.

According to FAA officials, one way adequate office coverage was maintained under AWS was a system whereby employees arranged to substitute for each other on their nonworkdays.

## FAA Kansas City Regional Office

FAA's Kansas City, Missouri, regional office had about 3,000 employees. It allowed two flexible schedule options—flexitour and gliding schedule—and also permitted 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules.

Under the flexible schedule options, employees could select their arrival and departure times within the flexible band of 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Under the flexitour option, once times were selected, the daily schedules were fixed. The gliding schedule option permitted employees to change their daily arrival and departure times. Regional officials said a survey of employees on gliding schedules showed the employees usually arrived within a 15- to 20-minute window every day. Both flexible schedules allowed employees to carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours from pay period to pay period.

Both the 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules let employees select any day of the week as their nonworkday. Employees on compressed schedules could select their arrival and departure times within a flexible band of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

About 250 employees participated in AWS. About half were on gliding schedules, and half were on compressed schedules. The most popular compressed schedule was the 5-4/9; fewer than 10 employees worked a 4/10 schedule.

## FHWA

FHWA employed about 3,700 people nationwide, with about 1,100 in headquarters.

### FHWA Headquarters

FHWA's headquarters' AWS policy allowed employees to work flexitour schedules. The program required employees to work 8 hours every day of the week, but they could vary their arrival and departure times with supervisory approval. The flexible band was 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and core hours were 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Credit hours were not allowed.

In July 1992, FHWA issued guidance urging supervisors to support the flexitour program. According to the guidance, FHWA wanted to give employees as much flexibility as possible to help them accommodate their professional and personal obligations.

The personnel official told us that FHWA planned to implement a compressed schedule program agencywide in early 1994. The 5-4/9 schedule will be the option most generally available.

## FHWA Denver Regional Office

The Denver region included the central office and six divisions that were located in various states. The regional office also provided administrative services to the independently managed Office of Motor Carriers. The region employed 150 people, and the Office of Motor Carriers employed 41.

The region adopted FHWA headquarters' AWS policy as its guidance. It had been using a flexitour program without credit hours for about 14 years. The region allowed each division to establish its own flexible band and core hours.

## FRA

FRA had about 700 employees nationwide, including about 280 in headquarters.

FRA implemented a flexitour program with no credit hours in 1979. It allowed employees to arrange their working hours any time between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. However, employees were allowed 15 minutes leeway in their scheduled arrival times each day, with their departure times adjusted accordingly. For example, an employee scheduled to arrive at 7:45 a.m. could report as early as 7:30 a.m. or as late as 8:00 a.m. and depart 8-1/2 hours later.

Under the AWS policy, all headquarters employees were eligible to participate in the flexitour program. An agency official said it was difficult to determine the number of employees who actually participated since approval authority was delegated to the lowest supervisory level. The official also said some employees were required to work standard FRA business hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to ensure adequate employee coverage for the public. However, the official believed that the majority of headquarters employees used the program.

In September 1992, FRA's regional office in Portland, Oregon, was granted approval to pilot a maxiflex program for its safety inspectors. Under this program, employees could carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours, but an employee's daily shift could not exceed 12 hours, including meal breaks. Of the 66 employees eligible for the maxiflex program, 62 were participating. Due to the success of its maxiflex pilot, FRA had expanded the maxiflex program to another three regions by November 1993 and planned to implement maxiflex in its remaining four regions in early 1994.

The official said AWS helped the agency accomplish its mission. He said FRA plans to adjust the program where necessary to meet its changing needs and the increasing demands expected of a shrinking workforce. As of November 1993, FRA was organizing a task force to evaluate more flexible AWS programs for use throughout FRA.

## FTA

FTA employed approximately 500 employees nationwide, including over 300 in headquarters.

Like FRA, FTA employees were allowed to work flexitour schedules, with 15-minutes leeway in their scheduled arrival and departure times each day. Credit hours were not allowed.

According to an FTA official, when the Office of the Secretary of Transportation polled the various DOT component agencies about their interest in changing the DOT AWS policy, the FTA administrator supported liberalizing the policy and allowing each agency maximum flexibility in determining how AWS would be carried out.

We were also told by the official that the 5-4/9 compressed schedule option had been approved for most employees and would be implemented in early 1994.

## Maritime Administration

MARAD employed about 1,100 people, including about 500 in headquarters.

Since 1977, MARAD's AWS program has allowed headquarters employees to work flexitour schedules, whereby they could select their 8-hour workdays within a flexible band of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The 15-minute leeway in arrival and departure times allowed by FRA and FTA was not permitted. However, the 30-minute lunch could be extended for personal needs and the time made up later in the day. The flexitour program did not permit credit hours to be earned. According to MARAD officials, employees in the regions were not allowed to participate in the AWS program.

## NHTSA

NHTSA had approximately 640 employees nationwide, including about 540 in headquarters.

In its June 1984 guidance on AWS, NHTSA required uniform work hours for all employees but allowed exceptions on a case-by-case basis. According

to agency officials, in actual practice, everyone was eligible to participate in a flexitour program. Under the program, headquarters employees could arrive as early as 6:30 a.m. The field offices also used flexitour; however, their hours of operation could be different from headquarters. No credit hours were permitted. We were told by NHTSA officials that approximately 90 percent of all employees worked flexitour schedules.

### RSPA

RSPA employed about 800 people nationwide, including about 260 in headquarters.

All RSPA employees could work flexitour schedules. They could select arrival and departure times within the flexible band of 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Once working hours were selected, they became fixed tours of duty. Credit hours were not allowed under the flexitour program. According to RSPA officials, most headquarters employees chose to work the regular hours 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. rather than flexitour schedules.

In September 1991, RSPA began a pilot test of credit hours in one of its regional centers. The test permitted employees to earn and carry over a maximum of 6 credit hours, which they could use to reduce the length of a subsequent workday or workweek. In June 1993, the credit hours program was made permanent at the regional center.

In June 1992, an RSPA task force recommended that a 5-4/9 compressed schedule program be adopted. According to the task force, a 5-4/9 schedule could be implemented easily, be made available to the maximum number of employees, be the least disruptive to existing operations, and provide an excellent "baseline" standard to which other AWS programs could be attached. According to an RSPA official, the 5-4/9 schedule would be implemented because the DOT-wide AWS policy had been changed to permit it.

## Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) carries out its mission through three operating organizations—the National Cemetery System (NCS), Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), and Veterans Health Administration (VHA). We visited the headquarters and one regional office of each of the operating divisions. We also visited four medical facilities.

VA has two legal employment authorities (Title 38 U.S.C. and Title 5 U.S.C.) under which it operates. Title 38 applies to health care occupations, and

title 5 applies to all other occupations. VA followed two AWS policies—one for headquarters or central office employees and one for field employees.

Under VA's headquarters AWS policy, employees could work flexitour schedules only. They could select arrival and departure times within a flexible band. Once working hours were selected, they became fixed tours of duty. However, employees were allowed 15-minutes leeway in their arrival times. For example, an employee selecting 7:30 a.m. as a starting time could report for work any time between 7:15 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. and adjust the departure time accordingly. Credit hours were not allowed under the flexitour program.

In September 1993, VA management authorized a compressed schedule test for all headquarters employees to begin October 3, 1993, and continue for 1 year. Organizations were delegated the responsibility for deciding whether a 5-4/9, a 4/10, or both compressed schedules would be allowed. Organizations were to fully implement the test no later than November 1, 1993. VA management saw this as an opportunity to test a program that should maximize efficiency and productivity and, at the same time, improve the overall morale and quality of life for employees. The compressed schedule was expected to create a work environment that would support the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified workforce by offering employees the opportunity to work schedules that provided additional time to fulfill their personal responsibilities.

Under VA's field office AWS policy, title 5 employees could work flexitour schedules in the same manner as headquarters employees. However, compressed schedules have always been allowed, although a unit could not have both flexitour and compressed schedules.

The policy allowed medical center directors to determine AWS practices for health care workers, excluding physicians and dentists,[4] in VHA field locations. The directors were authorized to allow employees to work flexitour or compressed schedules.[5]

## NCS

NCS employed 1,250 employees nationwide, including about 170 at headquarters.

[4]VA policy prohibited full-time physicians and dentists from participating in AWS because they were compensated on a daily basis and were expected to be available for duty 7 days a week.

[5]Some medical facilities used the "Baylor plan" for registered nurses whereby they worked two 12-hour shifts each weekend and were paid for 40 hours.

NCS had no national AWS policy. Each unit was allowed to determine its own work schedule.

## NCS Headquarters

NCS headquarters offices had used flexitour schedules with no credit hours since 1987. The flexible band was 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. According to an official, the program had not changed since its inception, and there were no restrictions on who could participate.

In October 1993, NCS began piloting a compressed schedule for headquarters employees. According to an NCS official, evaluations of the program thus far showed that employees had acted responsibly about scheduling leave, and productivity had improved. In addition, labor/employee relations problems had decreased significantly during the first month of the pilot.

## NCS Denver Area Office

The Denver area office was responsible for 28 VA national cemeteries. About 75 percent of the employees were blue-collar workers engaged in burial duties.

Fourteen employees worked in the area office and participated in the program. They were allowed to work flexitour schedules within a flexible band of 6:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., and credit hours were not allowed.

Most burial work at the cemeteries was performed by interment crews. The crews work together, take breaks together, and lunch together. Burials occur during the public service hours of 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. According to an area office official, the nature of burial duties made it difficult for employees to participate in AWS. For example, he said most burials were on Mondays and Fridays, and allowing compressed schedules would cause problems if employees selected one of those days as their nonworkday. Thus, most cemeteries required employees to work traditional schedules. Nonetheless, crews at two cemeteries—Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and Los Angeles, California—were allowed to work compressed schedules.

The Fort Snelling cemetery has had a 5-4/9 compressed schedule since 1986. Of 43 employees, 18 worked compressed schedules. To ensure continuity of work, no more than four employees should be off on the same day. However, the official acknowledged that the cemetery sometimes experienced problems doing its work on days when greater numbers of employees were away.

Unlike other cemeteries under the area office, the Los Angeles cemetery was a "closed" cemetery. Its burials were limited to spouses and cremated remains. The cemetery has allowed its employees to work either a 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedule since October 1990. Thirteen of 21 employees worked the 4/10 schedule; no employees worked the 5-4/9 option.

## VBA

VBA employed about 12,800 people nationwide, including about 575 in the central office.

An agency official said that regional offices in VBA experimented with compressed schedules in the early 1980s. However, because of difficulties encountered in the experiment, the program was terminated at all but one office. Two of the difficulties were said to be increased work backlogs and reduced opportunities for interaction with customers, particularly at the smaller regional offices. He explained that, on the basis of VBA's experience, management has been opposed to compressed work schedules.

### VBA Headquarters

Employees could work flexitour schedules with no credit hours. They were given 15-minute grace periods before they were considered tardy.

On November 1, 1993, VBA began a compressed schedule program for full-time employees as part of the VA headquarters' 1-year test. Under the test, VBA allowed both 5-4/9 and 4/10 work schedules.

### VBA San Francisco Regional Office

The regional office employed about 400 people. It allowed employees to work flexitour or compressed schedules. The flexitour program allowed 15-minute grace periods from employees' scheduled starting times. No credit hours were allowed. The compressed schedule program was a 5-4/9 arrangement. Similar to flexitour, employees on compressed schedules were allowed the 15-minute grace period.

An agency official told us that the San Francisco regional office was the only VBA office to continue the compressed schedules after the experiment ended. The official said he believed the program worked in the region because most managers were supportive of the program. About 100 of the 400 employees worked 5-4/9 compressed schedules.

## VHA

VHA employed approximately 208,000 employees nationwide, including about 860 in headquarters.

### VHA Headquarters

Headquarters employees were allowed to work flexitour schedules with no credit hours. Employees could select their arrival and departure times within a flexible band.

Similar to other VA headquarters components, VHA's participation in the compressed schedule test began November 1, 1993. Most employees could work either the 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedules. VHA also allowed title 38 personnel, including physicians, dentists, and members of the Senior Executive Service, to participate in the compressed schedule test. However, they could only work the 5-4/9 schedule.

### VHA San Francisco Regional Office

The regional office was responsible for 29 medical centers, 6 outpatient clinics, and 1 domiciliary. The San Francisco region had about 36,000 employees, including about 100 in the regional office.

In February 1991, the regional office studied various AWS options. It piloted a compressed schedule program for 6 months and made the program permanent in February 1992. The most predominant compressed schedule worked was the 5-4/9, but a 4/10 schedule was also allowed. According to a regional official, compressed schedules helped the region in its work with VA offices in the eastern part of the country. Employees could also work a flexitour schedule, whereby employees could select their own arrival and departure times within a flexible band. Credit hours were not allowed.

## VA Medical Facilities

We visited VA medical facilities in Denver; Kansas City, Missouri; San Antonio; and San Francisco. Each facility employed about the same number of workers; however, their AWS policies differed widely.

### Denver VA Medical Center

The Denver VA medical center employed about 1,700 people. According to center officials, the majority of nonmedical employees were not permitted to work alternative schedules because their work responsibilities in such areas as laboratories and records management were interdependent. They were required to work 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Nursing staff at the center could work compressed schedules consisting of either four 10-hour days or three 12-hour days and one 8-hour day. Nursing duties were a 24-hour-a-day service, and adequate coverage had to be maintained. The chief of the nursing service believed in participatory management and allowed the nursing staff in each unit or ward to determine whether they could accomplish their responsibilities using compressed schedules.

Before compressed schedules could be implemented, the majority of the nurses in the unit had to be willing to work the schedules. Then, the head nurse of the unit determined which of the compressed schedule options would provide adequate patient care. Of the 600 nurses at the center, 120 were eligible to work compressed schedules, and about 70 chose to participate in them.

Clerical staff in the nursing units could work flexitour schedules. They had to work 8 hours a day, but they could arrive as early as 7:00 a.m. and leave as late as 5:00 p.m. No credit hours were allowed. A nursing service's review of the AWS program found it satisfactorily met both patient care and employee needs.

Kansas City VA Medical Center

The Kansas City VA medical center employed about 1,500 people. It had used 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedules since 1989.

According to a center official, the center director allowed each unit manager to decide if compressed schedules would be used. The director did not allow any units to use flexible work schedules.

Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital

The Audie L. Murphy Hospital in San Antonio employed about 2,000 people.

Nursing staff in the intensive care units had been allowed to work 3-day compressed schedules for a number of years. They worked six 12-hour days and one 8-hour day each pay period.

Eleven employees in two other units—inpatient pharmacy and janitorial services—worked 4/10 schedules.

According to hospital officials, AWS would not be appropriate in most other areas of the hospital since they operated on a 24-hour-a-day schedule. They said AWS would not allow the hospital to meet its mission, especially if employees could arrive at any time within a flexible band. They believed all employees on the same shifts needed to work the same hours to be productive.

San Francisco VA Medical Center

The San Francisco VA medical center employed about 2,000 people. The center's AWS policy made flexitour and compressed schedules available to most employees, subject to approval by the management of each unit. However, a unit could not have both flexitour and compressed schedules.

Under the flexitour schedule, no credit hours were allowed. About 70 percent of all eligible employees participated in AWS.

Under the compressed schedule program, the 5-4/9 and 4/10 options were authorized. Most units opted for the 4/10 schedule. Center officials said employees seldom used flexitour schedules.

The officials said compressed schedules offered a number of advantages, including (1) a good recruitment and retention tool, (2) maximum use of limited office and parking space, and (3) reduction in the number of cars on the roads commuting to work. According to the officials, employees policed the program themselves, and there had been few abuses. The officials said the most important factor that contributed to the AWS program's success was the effective communication that occurred between employees and management. They added that some of the small organizations in the center, where most positions were unique and highly specialized, did not use AWS to avoid compromising the quality of patient care.

**Table II.1: Organizations' AWS Programs**

As of September 1993

| | AWS programs | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Organizations** | **Types allowed** | **Credit hours[a]** | **AWS Availability/limitations** |
| **Air Force** headquarters | None | | No AWS program. |
| Air Education and Training Command, Lackland AFB | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | Civilian personnel office only. |
| | 3-day week | | Nursing staff only. |
| Air Education and Training Command, Randolph AFB | Flexitour | None | Most employees eligible. |
| | 5-4/9 | | Two units only. |
| Air Force Intelligence Command, Kelly AFB | None | | No AWS program. |
| Materiel Command, Brooks AFB | Flexitour | None | One unit only. |
| Materiel Command, Kelly AFB | Flexitour | None | Union employees. |
| | Flexitour | 16 hours | Nonunion employees. |
| | | | Also piloting a 4/10 compressed schedule in two units. |

(continued)

As of September 1993

| Organizations | AWS programs: Types allowed | AWS programs: Credit hours[a] | AWS Availability/limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EPA**/headquarters | Flexitour | 24 hours | Virtually all employees eligible for flexitour. |
| | 5-4/9 | | Most employees eligible for 5-4/9. |
| EPA Kansas City regional office | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible for both programs. |
| | 5-4/9 | | |
| **EEOC**/headquarters | Flexitour, gliding schedule | 4 hours | Most employees eligible. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | One headquarters office worked a 4/10 schedule. |
| **FCA**/headquarters | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |
| | 5-4/9 | | Available to most employees during daylight savings time only.[b] |
| **HHS**/headquarters | Flexitour | 20 hours | Some nonunion employees could not earn credit hours or work compressed schedules. |
| | 5-4/9 | | |
| HHS Kansas City regional office | Flexitour | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| | 5-4/9 | | |
| ACF/headquarters | Gliding schedule | 16 hours | Some nonunion employees could not earn credit hours or work compressed schedules. |
| | 5-4/9 | | |
| HCFA/headquarters | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| | Extended flex program (5-4/9) | | |
| PHS/headquarters | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for gliding schedule. Nonunion employees may work compressed schedules only with the approval of their office directors. |
| | 5-4/9 | | |
| SSA/headquarters | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | Small number of employees in one office were allowed to work a 4/10 compressed schedule. |

(continued)

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As of September 1993

| Organizations | AWS programs: Types allowed | AWS programs: Credit hours[a] | AWS Availability/limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| SSA Kansas City regional office | Flexitour, gliding schedule | 24 hours (Teleservice centers employees earn 20 credit hours.) | District and branch office employees may not earn credit hours. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | Only staff attorneys were eligible for gliding schedules with credit hours, and 5-4/9 or 4/10 compressed schedules. |
| **DOI**/headquarters | Flexitour, gliding schedule | None | Most employees eligible, although some headquarters units chose not to participate in AWS. |
| | Maxiflex | 10 hours | Allowed in one office for employees on travel status. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | One office allowed employees to work a 4/10 schedule. |
| BIA | Flexitour, gliding schedule | None | Most headquarters employees were limited to the flexitour option. AWS program restrictions were based on local union agreements. |
| | Maxiflex | 24 hours | Less than 10 percent of headquarters staff were authorized to use the 5-4/9 compressed schedule. No one in headquarters could work the 4/10 compressed schedule. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | |
| BLM/headquarters | Maxiflex | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | |
| BLM Sacramento State Office | Maxiflex | 24 hours | All employees eligible. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | |
| BOM/headquarters | Gliding schedule | None | Most employees eligible. In June 1993, headquarters started piloting a 5-4/9 schedule for one year. |
| BOM Denver field office | Gliding schedule | None[c] | Most employees eligible. |
| | 5-4/9 | | One unit only. |
| BOR/headquarters (Denver) | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | All employees eligible for both programs. |
| | 5-4/9 | | |

(continued)

As of September 1993

| Organizations | AWS programs | | AWS Availability/limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Types allowed | Credit hours[a] | |
| BOR Sacramento regional office | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | Most employees eligible. Members of one union chose not to participate in the gliding schedule with credit hours plan. |
| FWS/headquarters | Gliding schedule<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | None | Some units allowed gliding schedules; some allowed compressed; and some did not allow AWS schedules. |
| FWS Denver regional office | Flexitour<br>5-4/9 | None | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| MMS/headquarters | Gliding schedule<br>5-4/9 | None | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| MMS Camarillo area office | Flexitour<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | None | Most employees eligible. |
| NPS/headquarters | Flexitour, gliding schedule<br>Maxiflex<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | None<br>24 hours | Most employees eligible for all programs. |
| NPS San Francisco regional office | Maxiflex<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | 24 hours | Most regional office employees eligible.<br>Most park employees eligible. |
| OSM/headquarters | Flexitour<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | 10 hours | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| OSM Western Support Center, Denver | Flexitour<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | 10 hours | All employees eligible; however, credit hours option seldom used. |
| USGS/headquarters | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | Most employees eligible. |
| USGS Central regional office, Denver | Gliding schedule | 24 hours | Most employees eligible. |
| **SEC**/headquarters | Flexitour<br>5-4/9 | None | Up to 15 percent of employees could participate agencywide. Only two groups authorized to use compressed schedule. |
| **DOT**/headquarters[d] | Flexitour<br>5-4/9 | None | Most employees eligible.<br>Only one office authorized to use compressed schedules. |
| Coast Guard/headquarters | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |

(continued)

As of September 1993

| Organizations | AWS programs | | AWS Availability/limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Types allowed | Credit hours[a] | |
| Coast Guard Maintenance and Logistics Command, Pacific | Flexitour<br>5-4/9 | None | Most employees eligible for both programs. |
| FAA/headquarters | Flexitour, gliding schedule, variable schedules, or maxiflex<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for all programs, subject to management approval. |
| FAA Kansas City regional office | Flexitour, gliding schedule<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | 24 hours | Most employees eligible for all programs. |
| FHWA/headquarters[e] | Flexitour | None | Most employees eligible. |
| FHWA Denver regional office | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |
| FRA[f] | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. Four regions had a maxiflex with 24 credit hours program for safety inspectors. |
| FTA[g] | Flexitour | None | Most employees eligible. |
| MARAD | Flexitour | None | Headquarters employees only. |
| NHTSA | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |
| RSPA | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible, but most did not participate. One regional center allowed a maximum of 6 credit hours. |
| VA/headquarters[h] | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |
| NCS/headquarters[i] | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |
| NCS Western area office, Denver | Flexitour<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | None | All area office employees eligible.<br>Burial crews at two cemeteries were eligible for compressed schedules. |
| VBA/headquarters[j] | Flexitour | None | Most employees eligible. |
| VBA San Francisco regional office | Flexitour<br>5-4/9 | None | All employees eligible for flexitour.<br>Most employees eligible for 5-4/9. |
| VHA/headquarters[k] | Flexitour | None | All employees eligible. |
| VHA San Francisco regional office | Flexitour<br>5-4/9, 4/10 | None | All employees eligible. |

(continued)

As of September 1993

| Organizations | AWS programs | | AWS Availability/limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Types allowed | Credit hours[a] | |
| Denver VA Medical Center | Flexitour | None | Clerical staff in nursing units only. |
| | 4/10, 3-day week | | Certain nursing staff only. |
| Kansas City VA Medical Center | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | Most employees eligible. |
| Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, San Antonio | 3-day week | | Intensive care nursing staff only. |
| | 4/10 | | Two nonmedical units only. |
| San Francisco VA Medical Center | Flexitour | None | Most employees eligible for both programs; however, only one type (flexitour or compressed) could be used in any unit. |
| | 5-4/9, 4/10 | | |

[a]Refers to the maximum number of credit hours employees working flexible schedules are allowed to carry over from one pay period to another. The statute does not permit credit hours to be earned in compressed schedule programs.

[b]Effective November 1993, all full-time managers and employees were allowed to work compressed schedules year-round.

[c]In October 1993, the Denver regional office amended the gliding schedule program to allow 24 credit hours.

[d]In November 1993, DOT implemented a more liberal AWS policy and delegated approval of AWS programs to the heads of its operating administrations.

[e]We were told that FHWA would implement a compressed schedule program agencywide in January 1994.

[f]As of November 1993, FRA was organizing a task force to evaluate more flexible AWS programs for utilization by headquarters employees and clerical and administrative personnel located in field offices.

[g]We were told that the 5-4/9 compressed schedule had been approved for most employees and would be implemented in early 1994.

[h]A 1-year compressed-schedule pilot began for VA's headquarters employees in October or November 1993.

[i]In October 1993, NCS began piloting a compressed schedule program for headquarters employees.

[j]In November 1993, VBA began a 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedule program for its full-time employees.

[k]VHA began a 5-4/9 and 4/10 compressed schedule program in November 1993. All employees, including title 38 employees, were eligible to work compressed schedules. However, Senior Executive Service employees and their title 38 equivalents could not work 4/10 schedules.

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